Social Stratification and Social Relations: An Empirical Test of the Disjunctiveness of Social Classes
Author(s): Robert A. Ellis
Source: *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 22, No. 5 (Oct., 1957), pp. 570-578
Published by: American Sociological Association
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2089483
Accessed: 27-12-2015 20:36 UTC

REFERENCES
Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:
http://www.jstor.org/stable/2089483?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Sage Publications, Inc. and American Sociological Association are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *American Sociological Review*.

http://www.jstor.org

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

inappropriate directions, the normal good boy in the high delinquency area, the normal bad boy in the high delinquency area, the normal good boy in the good environment, and the normal bad boy in the good environment can be understood. Concept of self and other is the differential response component that helps to explain why some succumb and others do not, why some gravitate toward socially unacceptable patterns of behavior and others veer away from them.

Concept of self and other contains the impact of life on the person as he has internalized his experience. In other words, it consists of the residues of attitudes and meanings accumulated through the interaction of a certain organism or constitution in interpersonal relations. Appropriate or inappropriate concepts of self and other together comprise a modal socio-psychological development and each may equally involve a normal development.

In conclusion, the authors wish to point out that their extension of self theory to explain insulation against and proneness toward delinquency is intended to apply only to the development of "normal or modal" goodness and badness and not a goodnesss generated by neurotic and prepsychotic components or a badness generated by pathological conditions or faulty character development (psychopathic personality). Nevertheless, because it applies to the normal or modal acquisition of insulation against or proneness toward delinquency, self theory seems to the authors to be the best operational basis for designing effective prevention and treatment measures.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND SOCIAL RELATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL TEST OF THE DISJUNCTIVENESS OF SOCIAL CLASSES *

ROBERT A. ELLIS
Stanford University

THE failure of several recent investigators to obtain evidence of disjunctive social classes [1] has led a number of social scientists to doubt the validity of the social class hypothesis. The negative findings have been considered as evidence to support "the continuum theory of social stratification," in which the prestige status system is conceived of as a hierarchically-arranged order of social positions.[2]

* Revision of paper read at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Society, September, 1956. Included are findings from a paper on "Class Awareness in a Jamaican Market Town," presented at the Spring meeting of the Southwestern Anthropological Society, May, 1956. The present report is based on the writer's unpublished dissertation, "Social Stratification in a Jamaican Market Town: A Conceptual and Methodological Analysis," Yale University, 1956. Data for the research were collected during the summer of 1954 as part of the Yale Interdisciplinary Training Program. The author is indebted to that program and to the Ford and Carnegie Foundations, which financed separate phases of it. Appreciation is expressed to August B. Hollingshead and Maurice R. Davie for their many helpful suggestions and constructive criticisms. The author is also indebted to the many persons in Jamaica who so willingly co-operated with him during the course of the research.

[1] Otis Dudley Duncan and Jay W. Artis, "Some Problems of Stratification Research," *Rural Sociology,* 16 (March, 1951), pp. 17–29; Stanley Hetzler, "An Investigation of the Distinctiveness of Social Classes," *American Sociological Review,* 18 (October, 1953), pp. 493–497; Godfrey Hochbaum, John G. Darley, E. D. Monachesi, and Charles Bird, "Socio-Economic Variables in a Large City," *American Journal of Sociology,* 61 (July, 1955), pp. 31–38; William F. Kenkel, "An Experimental Analysis of Social Stratification in Columbus, Ohio," Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1952; Thomas E. Lasswell, "A Study of Social Stratification Using an Area Sample of Raters," *American Sociological Review,* 19 (June, 1954), pp. 310–313; Gerhardt E. Lenski, "American Social Classes: Statistical Strata or Social Groups?" *American Journal of Sociology,* 58 (September, 1952), pp. 139–144; Arnold M. Rose, "The Popular Meaning of Class Designation," *Sociology and Social Research,* 38 (September-October, 1953), pp. 14–21.

[2] Cuber and Kenkel's treatment is largely devoted

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

This paper is concerned with the issue of whether prestige status data are more adequately interpreted as categorical or continuous. It reports the results of a stratification study of the Jamaican market town of Christiana, which was undertaken to determine whether the method of social class analysis that Hollingshead introduced and tested in Elmtown [3] could be applied to the Jamaican community. As in Elmtown, there were three conditions for a commonly recognized and behaviorally relevant social class structure: (1) that the community residents would be systematically aware of social class distinctions; (2) that a social class structure would be derived from the mutual evaluations of prestige made by the inhabitants; and (3) that independent evidence of the relevance of the social class concept would be obtained.[4]

Social class was treated as a theoretical construct rather than as a substantive entity.[5] Consequently, the validity of the social class frame of reference depended upon the demonstrability of its empirical determinacy and its predictive value.[6] It was not necessary, as Lasswell and Lenski have apparently assumed,[7] to demonstrate the existence of a unique set of social class boundaries unambiguously perceived by the community residents.

Two conditions made Jamaica an excellent setting for this test. First, previous studies of the Jamaican social structure indicated there was a well-defined and important system of social inequality similar to the American prestige status system.[8] Second, as in America, stratification researchers disagreed about whether social status data are interpreted more adequately as categorical or continuous in form.[9]

THE COMMMUNITY SETTING

Christiana is situated in the upland interior of Jamaica, thirty miles from the "tourist belt" on the island's North Coast. It has a population of approximately 2300 persons in a little less than four square miles. From its founding in the late nineteenth century, the town's commercial focus has been a public market that serves small farmers who are scattered throughout the surrounding countryside. On the weekly market day 80 per cent of the retail business is transacted by the local merchants and shopkeepers.[10]

Although farming is the major vocation, the diversity of occupations is comparable with that found in most small towns in the United States. However, in Christiana there is a greater concentration in the "lower class occupations" than in most American towns. Approximately 65 per cent of the adults residing in the town are small peasant proprietors, landless peasants (i.e., farm and/or general laborers), and domestic servants.

to the presentation of the continuum theory of social stratification. See John F. Cuber and William F. Kenkel, *Social Stratification in the United States,* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1954.

[3] August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth,* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1948.

[4] *Ibid.,* pp. 25–40, 68–74, 80–82, 204–243.

[5] Cf. August B. Hollingshead, "Community Research: Development and Present Condition," *American Sociological Review,* 13 (April, 1948), p. 143.

[6] The writer concurs with Kaufman's statement that: ". . . the basic question is not whether the class concept is 'real' or 'nominal'; but (1) By what procedures is it defined? and (2) How is it related to other constructs—the content of the term?" See Harold F. Kaufman, "Discussion" of Hollingshead, *op. cit.,* p. 148.

[7] Lasswell, *op. cit.;* Lenski, *op. cit.*

[8] See Leonard Broom, "The Social Differentiation of Jamaica," *American Sociological Review,* 19 (April, 1954), pp. 115–125; Fernando Henriques, *Family and Colour in Jamaica,* London: Eyre & Spottiswoodie, 1953. Evidence that the Jamaican and American prestige systems were similar was also provided in the present study. An occupational scale developed and validated in the United States was found in another phase of this research to have a rank order correlation of .81 with the distribution of the average prestige ratings the Christiana residents received. In addition, this finding is consistent with Inkeles and Rossi's finding of a relatively standard ranking of occupational prestige in six different modern industrialized countries. See Ellis, *op. cit.,* pp. 237–266; Alex Inkeles and Peter H. Rossi, "National Comparisons of Occupational Prestige," *American Journal of Sociology,* 61 (January, 1956), pp. 329–339.

[9] Henriques, on the one hand, holds that the island's social order is most adequately viewed as a prestige continuum. See Henriques, *op. cit.,* p. 161. Broom, on the other hand, has maintained that a clearly demarcated social class structure is found in Jamaica and has denied that "social stratification in Jamaica . . . [can] be understood as an uninterrupted continuum of status positions." See Broom, *op. cit.,* p. 119.

[10] See Sydney W. Mintz, "The Jamaican Internal Marketing Pattern: Some Notes and Hypotheses," *Social and Economic Studies,* 4 (February, 1955), pp. 95–103.

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

Additional heterogeneity is found in wealth, religion, race, and ethnicity. Marked discrepancies in annual cash income prevail, with some few individuals earning as much as $18,000 and others obtaining less than $100. Religious organizations are numerous and varied. The three main churches are Moravian, Presbyterian, and Anglican, the last being commonly recognized as the dominant institution, at least in terms of power and prestige. In addition, a Catholic Church and a vast assortment of religious sects operate in the region. The population of Christiana, as is true in Jamaica in general, is predominantly colored. At least 95 per cent of the residents can be classified as of African extraction to a noticeable degree. The rest can be subdivided into three racial or ethnic categories: white European (or American), Chinese, and Syrian.

METHOD

To test the social class hypothesis, it was necessary to collect data on the mutual evaluations of prestige and the patterning of informal associations in the community. The procedures employed are described below.

Stratification Procedure. The judges rating technique was used for estimating the social class structure. As applied in the present research, three major modifications were introduced to avoid practices that have been criticized in previous versions of this technique: [11] a conventional sampling procedure was used for selecting both raters and ratees; the criteria and categories for prestige ratings were supplied by the individual raters—not by the researcher; and the median percentile was used instead of the arithmetic mean for combining the rating technique data.

The revised procedure involved the three following steps:

1. To establish a sample frame, a dwelling house census was taken with the co-operation of five long-time residents of Christiana, who provided information on the occupation, education, and religious affiliation of each head of household in the community. With one exception, the population enumerated in this census consisted of all adult heads of households who had resided in Christiana for a period of at least one year. The exception was the so-called peasantry class. A dialect barrier made it necessary to exclude this economically impoverished and uneducated aggregate from the sample frame. Without attempting to minimize the desirability of a more inclusive universe, we should point out that excluding this aggregate appears to bias the results against confirming the social class hypothesis. The peasantry consist of individuals whose social class positions would most easily be evaluated by the community at large, and who were separated from the other residents by a wide social gulf.

2. The sample frame was dichotomized into Anglican and non-Anglican. In addition, the relative social status of each individual was estimated by using Hollingshead's two factor Index of Social Position (ISP).[12] By the dual criteria of religious affiliation and ISP scores, a bifurcated array was constructed. That is, the Anglicans were arranged in descending order of their ISP scores, and a similar rank order was made of the non-Anglicans. Finally, a systematic sample was drawn by selecting every third person in the bifurcated array once a random entry had been made in the list.

3. The 34 residents who were selected served as both raters and ratees. During a structured interview, each resident was asked the following open-ended question: "What would you say are the most important social differences found among the people of Christiana? That is, what different groups or categories would you divide them into?" [13] Respondents who reported the presence of categorical social differences were asked to rate the class positions of the other sample subjects according to the number and types of categories they had reported.

Sociometric Procedure.[14] Each of the 34

[11] For an excellent critical appraisal of the judges rating technique, see Harold F. Kaufman, Otis Dudly Duncan, Neal Gross, and William H. Sewell, "Problems of Theory and Method in the Study of Social Stratification," *Rural Sociology,* 18 (March, 1953), pp. 15–16.

[12] See A. B. Hollingshead, R. Ellis, and E. Kirby, "Social Mobility and Mental Illness," *American Sociological Review,* 19 (October, 1954), p. 579.

[13] Except for the adjective "social" and for the town name, the question duplicates one asked in a study of class-consciousness in Ventura, California. See S. Stansfeld Sargent, "Class and Class-Consciousness in a California Town," *Social Problems,* 1 (June, 1953), p. 23.

[14] In the interview schedule, the sociometric

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

residents was asked to stipulate his degree of friendship with every one of the other 33 sample subjects. The interviewee could, in this task, make one of five choices: Don't Know, Very Friendly, Friendly, Neutral or Unfriendly. Two patterns of friendship were categorized: (1) Mutual Friendships (Very Friendly or Friendly reciprocated choices) and (2) Friendship Choice (Very Friendly).[15]

CLASS AWARENESS

Analysis of the rating technique data showed a high degree of class awareness in Christiana. To the majority of residents, social classes were commonly recognized. Three persons, however, disclaimed the existence of classes, feeling, as one of them expressed it, that "everybody is just ordinary." Since two of these disclaimers were elderly, the only sample subjects over 70 years old, there is a distinct possibility that age was important in their negative replies. In two additional cases it was impossible to gain an answer to the question on social differences.

Of the 29 residents who replied affirmatively 20 partitioned the community into three levels. Three persons divided Christiana into two social levels, making a simple rule-of-thumb categorization such as: "Some people have their parties for their friends and relatives; others don't." Three sample subjects maintained that four strata were to be found, while two perceived a five class system. For one elderly woman, who admitted the presence of social differences in Christiana, the topic was too painful to discuss openly. Her emotional reaction illustrates the fact that the topic of social class distinctions may be an anxiety-laden area.

Except for a young school teacher, who asserted that there definitely were three social levels in Christiana but could not name them, all those who replied affirmatively to the social differences question supplied terms for their categories. "Class" was the term most commonly employed. Nineteen persons referred to their categories in this manner. Classes, however, were described in various ways. Some individuals emphasized only the social character of class distinctions. Others stressed their strictly economic nature. Most often, however, class distinctions were reported to be based on a combination of many factors, with very little agreement concerning which traits counted most in determining class position. In all cases, the interviewees were able to use their own categories for class-typing the other sample subjects. A summary of these findings is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. RESPONSES TO THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTION ON SOCIAL DIFFERENCES

Answers		Sample Subjects
Denied social differences		3
No reply		2
Reported social defferences		29
Number of categories named:		
2	3	
3	20	
4	3	
5	2	
Did not enumerate	1	
Number using term "class"	19	
Not using	10	
Total subjects		34

A coefficient of concordance was computed between the prestige ratings to determine whether the ratings were commensurate. The W coefficient of .56 obtained in this test is statistically significant at the .01 level, indicating quite clearly that the raters, despite their varied class descriptions, had in systematic fashion class-typed their fellow townspeople.[16]

This suggests that extreme caution must

question preceded the social differences question by a page. This procedure insured greater reliability, since the researcher could be confident that the interviewees had correctly identified each of the ratees prior to the task of class-typing them. It also reduced the possibility that the raters' descriptions of the class structure might unduly influence their sociometric choices.

[15] The sociometric data on friendship undoubtedly provided a conservative estimate of the possible class cleavages. As Hollingshead's research suggests, persons are more likely to have their selection of best friends, rather than friends, in general, patterned along class lines. See Hollingshead, *op. cit.*, pp. 208–217.

[16] For this test, each set of ratings was transformed into prestige rankings. The W coefficient was corrected for the presence of tied ranks. For the rationale and method of calculating the coefficient of concordance, see Allen L. Edwards, *Statistical Methods for the Behavioral Sciences*, New York: Rinehart & Company, 1954, pp. 402–412, 430–433.

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

be exercised in interpreting social class data solely on the basis of the verbal criteria that people report. In the present data the fact that class categories were labelled differently—sometimes markedly so—did not signify that they were conceived differently. Instead, it appears that the labels applied by raters served only as convenient shorthand for a complex phenomenon, as social class is thought to be.[17] For instance, a respondent who distinguished between "the highest class" and "the business class" assigned some businessmen to "the highest class" and people who were engaged in such unbusiness-like occupations as teaching to "the business class." This discrepancy between verbal criteria and use of class categories indicates clearly that the validity of the class awareness concept ". . . is not to be found in the uniform conceptualizations of a social system by it members, but in the convergence (if it exists) of their several schemes of evaluation upon the same individuals." [18]

Thus, the first condition in the class analysis has been satisfied. The majority of people in Christiana accepted the existence of categorical social differences in their community as a social fact, and they were able to use the social levels they reported to class-type their fellow townspeople in systematic and meaningful fashion. Class awareness can be inferred to be present but no unique set of class boundaries were unambiguously perceived in the community. Overlap in the descriptions of the class structure by the raters is evidenced by (1) the unexplained variance in the coefficient of concordance computed between the prestige ratings, (2) the widely varied number of social levels reported by the raters, and (3) the finding, which cannot be detailed here, that a rater's perspective of the class structure varied systematically with his own position.[19] This overlap is to be expected. Class awareness is a perceptual phenomenon. Perceptual distortion will most likely occur when the objective environment is not clearly structured and when strong motives, attitudes, and values are evoked by the percept.[20] Both of these conditions were found in the present stratification data. Status symbols in Christiana were complex, ambiguous, and not necessarily monopolized by people from one prestige level, and as noted above, class differences could evoke strong emotional responses. Also, some distortion probably resulted from the limited experience persons had outside their own social stratum.

SOCIAL CLASS AND INFORMAL SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

To estimate the social class structure from the varied class perspectives held by the raters the ratings from the subjects were put on a common scale by transforming each set of ratings into percentiles. A composite prestige score for each sample subject was then obtained by calculating the median of the subject's percentile scores from all the other raters. The distribution of these average prestige scores (see Figure 1) furnished the basis for estimating the sample subjects' relative social status in the community.[21]

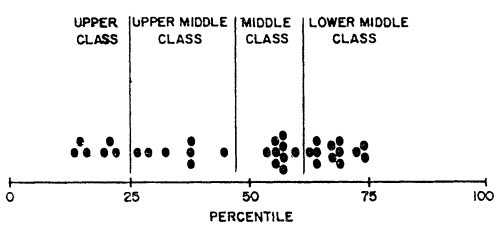

FIGURE 1. SOCIAL CLASS DIVISIONS ESTIMATED FROM THE PRESTIGE RATINGS

[17] See W. Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker, and Kenneth Eells, *Social Class in America,* Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1949, p. 129.

[18] Otis Dudley Duncan and Jay W. Artis, "Social Stratification in a Pennsylvania Rural Community," *Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 543,* State College: Pennsylvania State College School of Agriculture, 1951, p. 21.

[19] Generally, the greater the social distance separating the raters from the Upper Class, the greater was the average number of Upper Class assignments. By an analysis of the intercorrelations between the average class assignments it was found that this varied class perspective represented a difference in degree rather than in kind. The lowest rank order correlation obtained was .67.

[20] See Leonard Doob, *Social Psychology,* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1952, pp. 70–83.

[21] No formal reliability test was made of the rating data obtained from the sample subjects. However, the average prestige status scores were compared with similar scores assigned the ratees by six "expert" judges chosen for their presumably superior insight into the informal social structure of Christiana. A statistically significant rank order

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

As Figure 1 shows, there were four clusters, which suggested the presence of class cleavages. For convenience, the four classes are labelled: Upper, Upper Middle, Middle, and Lower Middle. Since no formula for estimating the location of the lines of cleavage was available, no more determinate estimate was possible. Instead, the cleavages are the product of the investigator's clinical judgment.

The reader should not assume that social status has been measured empirically along an interval scale. The median percentile, which has been used to combine ratings, is an ordinal scale statistic and, consequently, provides no information on the length of the status units involved. From the figure, we can infer that a person in the tenth percentile is higher in social status than a person in the fiftieth percentile. There is, however, no basis for calculating the degree of difference. For example, there is no basis for inferring that the distance between the tenth and fiftieth percentiles is greater than the differences between the fiftieth and sixtieth percentiles.[22]

Social Class Cohesion. The cohesiveness of the four classes was estimated by a sociometric index that Loomis and his colleagues have designated as the Coefficient of Agreement (CA).[23] This index was computed by dividing the total number of Mutual Friendships within a social class by the total number of Mutual Friendships theoretically possible. The index can range in value from zero to one. A zero value shows a total lack of cohesion, since it indicates no Mutual Friendships; a value of one means a maximum degree of cohesion, i.e., the Mutual Friendships equal the number theoretically possible. This common sense measure does not permit any probability statement concerning the cohesion of a given class. Statistical analysis by the method of chi square was not used since the data did not meet a cardinal assumption of chi square that the objects observed for the test of significance are randomly sampled. A systematic sample had been taken of residents in Christiana but not of Mutual Friendships.

The Coefficients of Agreement calculated for the total sample, the intraclass choices and the six interclass cells are presented in Table 2. The most striking result is the cohesion manifested in the Upper Class. The coefficient of .93 signifies that almost without exception people in this class chose each other as friends. This degree of cohesiveness is more than three times as great as that manifested by the total sample and is almost double that of any other class. This remarkable solidarity in the Upper Class cannot be explained merely in terms of their possessing more mutual friends in the sample at large. Table 2 shows that the interclass Coefficients of Agreement calculated between the Upper Class and the other three social classes do not differ markedly from the Coefficients of Agreement computed for the total sample.

TABLE 2. COEFFICIENTS OF AGREEMENT FOR THE SOCIAL CLASS DATA *

Subgroup †	N	Coefficients
Intraclass		
U	6	.93
UM	7	.52
M	9	.25
LM	12	.47
Interclass		
U–UM	13	.33
U–M	15	.30
U–LM	18	.24
UM–M	16	.25
UM–LM	19	.06
M–LM	21	.28
Coefficient of agreement for total sample	34	.29

* The Coefficient of Agreement is computed by dividing the total number of Mutual Friendships observed for a cell by the maximum number of Mutual Friendships theoretically possible for that cell.

† The abbreviations used are: U for Upper Class, UM for Upper Middle Class, M for Middle Class, and LM for Lower Middle Class.

correlation coefficient of .91 was computed between these two independently measured sets of prestige ratings.

[22] For a more detailed discussion of the relationship between the empirical scales of measurement used in research and the permissible statistical operations and inferences see S. S. Stevens, "Mathematics, Measurements, and Psychophysics," in *Handbook of Experimental Psychology,* edited by S. S. Stevens, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1951, pp. 1–49.

[23] Charles P. Loomis, Julio O. Morales, *et al.,* "Social Status and Communication in Costa Rican Rural Communities," in *Readings in Latin American Social Organization and Institutions,* edited by Olen E. Leonard and Charles P. Loomis, East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1953, p. 186.

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

Thus, the results indicate that the Upper Class in Christiana was a very tightly knit association group marked by a high degree of enclosure.[24]

No other subgroup in the sample manifested a degree of reciprocated friendship sufficient to be classified as an "association" group, in the literal sense of the term. However, the Mutual Friendships in the Upper Middle and Lower Middle Classes total approximately 50 per cent of the maximum number theoretically possible. This degree of cohesiveness is roughly one and a third times as great as for the total sample and is more than twice the degree of cohesiveness calculated for all the interclass subgroups combined (CA for the interclass subgroups combined equal .23). Moreover, the cohesion in these two social classes is appreciably in excess of the cohesion manifested by any single interclass subgroup. These results suggest that it might be useful in stratification analysis to distinguish between the degree of mutual association observed in the different social classes. For example, in Christiana the Upper Class would be classified as a *high association group,* the Upper Middle and Lower Middle Classes as *medium association groups,* and the Middle Class as a *low association group.*

The data on intraclass cohesion do not by themselves substantiate the social class hypothesis. It is possible that reliance on reciprocated friendship choices might have unduly biased the results in favor of the disjunctive hypothesis when in fact the failure of one social class, such as the Upper Class, to reciprocate friendship choices might be the sole factor responsible. Moreover, the lack of cohesion observed for the Middle Class might not indicate a *low association group,* as has been postulated, but that the subgroup was invalidly demarcated as a separate class. To remove these sources of doubt, a further analysis estimated the degree of cleavage between the four social classes. The general question was: Do people in Christiana choose members of their own social class as friends in marked preference to members of other social classes?

Social Class Cleavages. For this test, the sociometric data on Friendship Choices were analyzed by what Proctor and Loomis have termed an Index of Ingroup Preference (IP).[25] A value greater than 1.00 signifies ingroup preference, a value less than 1.00 signifies outgroup preference, and a value of 1.00 an absence of preference for either group. The absolute value of the index furnishes an estimate of the degree of preference. For instance, an index score of 2.00 would indicate that members of the ingroup preferred themselves to the outgroup twice as much as might be expected on the basis of the numerical composition of the two groups. Like the Coefficient of Agreement, this index does not lend itself to probability statements.

The Indices of Ingroup Preference computed for the four social classes are presented in Table 3. These results show that with the exception of the Middle Class, the townspeople of Christiana had the preponderance of their friendship choices located within their own social class. The Upper Class

[24] The disjunctiveness of this stratum can in part be traced to the important role of color in the stratification system of the community. The fact that the members of the Upper Class were predominantly white or near-white had the dual function of setting off the group from the rest of the community and of providing a unifying bond. Yet, the racial factor furnishes only a partial explanation of this high degree of social cleavage. Whiteness, by itself, was not a guarantee of Upper Class membership nor was it a prerequisite. Access to superior power and the qualities necessary to transform this power into social acceptance appeared equally important. See Robert A. Ellis, "Color and Class in a Jamaican Market Town," *Sociology and Social Research,* 41 (May-June, 1957), pp. 354–360.

[25] The Index of Ingroup Preference is represented by the following formula:

$$IP = \frac{Ca\text{–}a\ (b)}{Ca\text{–}b\ (a\text{–}1)}$$

where: a = the number of persons in the ingroup,
b = the number of persons in the outgroup,
Ca–a = the total number of choices directed by members of an ingroup to other members of the same ingroup.
Ca–b = the total number of choices directed by members of an ingroup to members of an outgroup.

See Charles H. Proctor and Charles P. Loomis, "Analysis of Sociometric Data," in Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart Cook (editors), *Research Methods in Social Relations,* Part II, New York: Dryden, 1951, p. 574.

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

TABLE 3. INDICES OF INGROUP PREFERENCE FOR THE FOUR SOCIAL CLASSES *

Outgroup †	U	UM	M	LM
U		2.67	0.83	2.08
UM	3.89		0.97	3.34
M	4.09	1.71		1.71
LM	4.62	16.00	0.94	
Rest of sample	4.24	3.27	0.92	2.15

* The Index of Ingroup Preference is calculated by dividing the ratio of observed ingroup choices to the observed outgroup choices by the ratio of ingroup choices that is expected on the basis of the numerical composition of the two groups.

† The abbreviations used are: U for Upper Class, UM for Upper Middle Class, M for Middle Class, and LM for Lower Middle Class.

proved to be most exclusive, with its members preferring each other as friends approximately four times as much as they preferred the rest of the sample combined. The Upper Middle and Lower Middle Classes evidenced lesser, but still marked, degrees of ingroup exclusiveness. The intraclass preference of the Upper Middle Class was approximately three times as great as its preference for the rest of the sample. The Lower Middle Class members preferred their own group approximately twice as much as they did the outgroup, when the latter comprised the rest of the sample.

A noticeable exception to the intraclass patterning of social relations is found in the Middle Class. The persons in this stratum did not discriminate along class lines in choosing friends, their friendship selections having been evenly distributed between their own class and the other three. However, the Middle Class was discriminated against by each of the other three classes in their friendship choices. This fact that the other classes did manifest ingroup exclusiveness in their relationship with the Middle Class indicates that the latter has been validly demarcated as a separate stratum. These amorphous preference data when coupled with the previous finding that the Middle Class is the only social stratum that can be classified as a low association group, would appear to indicate the marginal position of the Middle Class in the social structure.[26] That this phenomenon of marginality should be found in a small rural community is itself noteworthy and should serve to underscore the caution against indiscriminately applying Weber's concept of status group to all units of the social order.[27]

Another interesting aspect of the findings is the differential rejection pattern in the Friendship Choices. Persons in a given social class rejected individuals in a class subordinate to theirs to a greater extent than they were rejected by that subordinate class. This effect is most noticeable between the Upper Middle and Lower Middle Classes, where the Upper Middle Class rejected the Lower Middle Class roughly five times as much as it was rejected by them. With but one exception, this effect was present in varying degrees in all the friendship-choice patterns between the four social classes. The single exception was the Middle Class. Its members were rejected by persons in the Lower Middle Class twice as often as they in turn rejected persons in the Lower Middle Class.

This finding of a reciprocal, downward rejection pattern between the social classes in Christiana may be an unexpected gain of the present study if it can be replicated in other researches. These data may well reflect the process of social control that has mediated the inferred social class barriers. Although barriers were apparently in the reciprocal interaction between the social classes, it appears that the source of their strength lies in the actions of the superordinate classes. On the other hand, the reciprocal nature of these data furnishes evidence of a common value system and, thus, contradicts the notion of social prestige as a phenomenon simply arrogated by the superordinate class.

[26] Although this finding furnishes strong empirical confirmation for the position taken by Pfautz and Duncan, Mills, and Stone and Form that the middle class is not characterized by the closure found in the Upper and Lower Classes, the term, Middle Class, has a more limited reference in the present study than it does for these authors. See Pfautz and Duncan, *op. cit.*, p. 212; C. Wright Mills, "The Middle Classes in Middle-Sized Cities," *American Sociological Review*, 11 (December, 1946), pp. 520–529; Gregory P. Stone and William H. Form, "Instabilities in Status: The Problem of Hierarchy in the Community Study of Status Arrangements," *American Sociological Review*, 18 (April, 1953), pp. 158–160.

[27] Stone and Form, *op. cit.*

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The procedure Hollingshead used for studying the social class structure of Elmtown was applied in a Jamaican market town. The data indicated:

1. The people of Christiana were systematically aware of meaningful social class distinctions in their community.

2. A social class structure could be estimated from the prestige data.

3. Inferred class boundaries were congruent with observed behavioral divisions.[28]

The findings also indicate the importance of treating social class as a theoretical construct rather than as a substantive entity. The complex nature of the prestige data precluded inferring, as Warner has done, that Christiana was demarcated by a unique set of social classes which the community residents unambiguously recognized. Instead, distinction had to be drawn between the conceptions of the social order held by the community population and that abstracted by the researcher from these data. The validity of the class construct that was derived rests in: (1) its having been empirically anchored by specific and replicative research operations, and (2) its having been scientifically useful for predicting patterned social relations in Christiana.

The fact that the validity of the social class concept could be demonstrated in this research suggests a need for re-examining studies that support the continuous theory of social stratification. It is possible that the findings in these latter studies do not reflect inherent inadequacy of the social class hypothesis but rather the inattentiveness of the continuum theorists to the logic underlying this hypothesis.

[28] The differential distribution of influence in the community or the differential distribution of subcultural traits could have been used to test the relevance of the social class construct. However, the latter are not as easily and determinately measured as are friendship constellations.

This content downloaded from 130.15.241.167 on Sun, 27 Dec 2015 20:36:05 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions